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TAGS: [PREL](#) [JA](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: MFA PREPARING FOR PM WEN'S VISIT TO TOKYO

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Daniel
Shields. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[¶1.](#) (C) China and Japan hope to clarify and expand on the nature of their "strategic, mutually supportive partnership" during Premier Wen's planned mid-April visit to Tokyo, Asia Department DDG Qiu Guohong told Polmincouns March 12. Premier Wen's visit will be the first visit to Japan by a Chinese leader in seven years. China's thinking is that a successful visit by Premier Wen will pave the way for a visit by PM Abe to Beijing later this year and then, perhaps next spring, a visit by President Hu to Japan. The Chinese and Japanese sides are both profoundly aware that a less than successful visit by Premier Wen would be worse than no visit at all, Qiu said. Polmincouns noted that the United States Government strongly supports efforts by China and Japan to improve their bilateral relationship.

[¶2.](#) (C) The formal reason for Wen's visit will be to participate in the opening ceremonies for the China-Japan Year of Exchange in Culture and Sport, Qiu said. In fact, this year is particularly significant because of the momentum it could bring to bilateral relations and because it marks the 70th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre. Proper handling of history issues, including the comfort women issue, remains China's top-priority bilateral issue, he said. China is also increasingly concerned about Japan's relationship with Taiwan, he said, and will want Tokyo to repeat standard formulations about respect for one-China in the joint statement to be issued during Premier Wen's visit.

[¶3.](#) (C) Japanese officials want economic issues and the East China Sea dispute over territory and resources to figure prominently in Premier Wen's visit, Qiu said. China feels the existing mechanism for handling disputes in the East China Sea is working well. Common interests have already been established and China has agreed to resume Director General-level consultations on the issue. Concerning the economy, China is not likely to agree to a Japanese request for a multi-ministerial meeting comparable to the United States' Senior Economic Dialogue, but can consider some higher-level discussion, Qiu said.

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